

SINGLES



ENGLISH



David, Elton, Slade — new releases

SLADE: Skweeze Me, Pleeze Me — (Polydor 2058 377). One-third of the big three up for review this week . . . those delicately-framed arbiters of immaculate taste, Slade. This Noddy-Jim song gives old leather-lungs a satisfactory showcase. They don't change much, but why should they? They go for smash-and-grab tactics — nipping one by the whatsits. That rolling rhythm pushes the whole thing along with alarming verve and gusto. You WILL get with it, the lads insist in their charmingly courteous way. You WILL, from the first crashing-smashing phrase kindly take notice, they demand. And you do. But don't ignore the flip side here — it's a drastic change of style, putting them back into hotchama-chotecha days, with violin swinging amiably. What a grate groop! — **CHART CERT.**

SHIRLEY BASSEY: Make The World A Little Younger (United Artists UP 35557). From her album Never Never, and accompanied by a typically forthright Arthur Greenslade arrangement — it's Shirley lulling us into false security with the verse, and then building with such dramatic suddenness that shocks one. Well this one, anyway. An obvious chart-er, with its amiable philosophy and such. — **CHART CERT.**



OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN: Let Me Be There (Pye Int. 25618). Written by ex-Shadow bassist John Rostill, and it's just right for Olivia, with the touch of the C and W feel in the backing and chorus. Male voices, including from the bass area, push it along in a gently relaxed style. Thing is that Olivia is always popular and if this song doesn't exactly extend her, it's very commercial — **CHART CERT.**

ARGENT: It's Only Money (Part two). — (Epic EPC 1628). This is Argent, which of course the French-orsomething for "money", at their most determined, so it's just got to do big things. Russ's powerful voice strides through a bass riff and the odd group touch of vocal, and it's a repeated phrase that insists on being sung, if you get the gist. Almost drug-like in the way this production takes over, but then Argent-lovers know all about it. It's only Argent — in good form. — **CHART CERT.**

CHRIS JAGGER: Something New (GM 003). This chap has a rather well-known brother, but that's probably no hindrance. The voice, on a self-penned song, has the same drawing sort of approach that his brother had early on. There's some fiery guitar figures, and a walking sort of tempo, and a lot of urgency and some lyrics that are rather special, once you get into them. This Chris is new, and probably quite something. — **CHART CHANCE.**

FAMILY CHILD: He (Polydor 2058-376). One of those out-of-the-blue singles that seem to have outstanding commercial chances, given plays on the radio. It's an almost painfully catchy song, for mixed voices, and once it enters the brain it takes a whole squad of bouncers to get it out again. Gospelly feel from lead voices. At least give it a quick spin; promise? **CHART CHANCE.**

GARY BENSON: The Concert (Birth). With some fierce instrumental moments behind, Gary is in good vocal nick on this story-line song. Not notably hit-headed, but it's got both atmosphere and style.

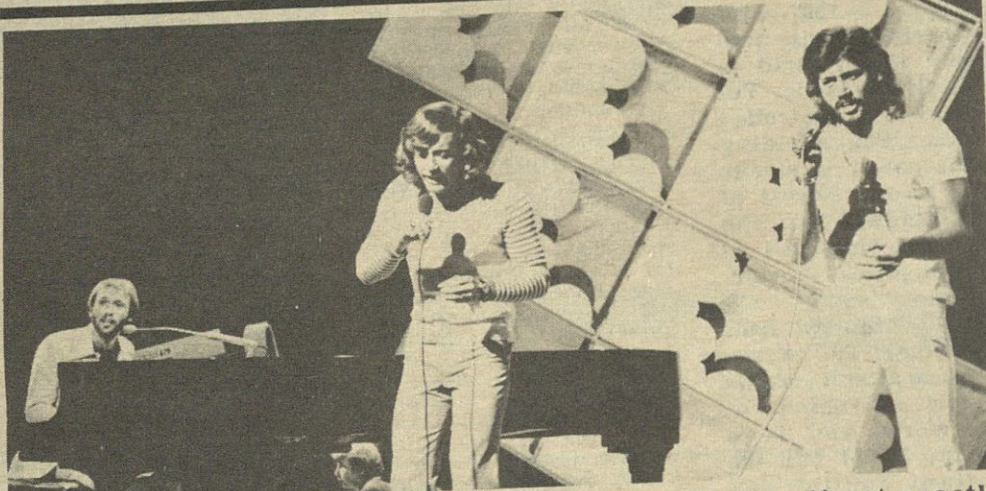
DONNA MARIE NEWMAN: Born Too Late (Mooncrest). She's only nine, but she does a pretty fair old job on this one-time Poni-Tails' hit. Confident, but not too much so . . . avoiding precocity in a swirl of purring strings etc. Could click with family heads.

SECRETS: Sha La Ley (Rak). Light-edged vocal here as the mood builds . . . it's a rush-along sort of production. A bit too repetitive to get there with me, but once into the basic chorus it sounds fair enough.

SHUKI AND AVIVA: Listen To The Children (EMI). Duo from Israel who get big audience reaction in cabaret. This is a softly-presented item which doesn't really fit into the usual single category, but it's accurately sung.

THE BIG JUMP BAND: All I Want (Decca). Guitar-introed, build-up comes steadily, girl vocal lead, curious rolling sort of arrangement. Doesn't jump all that much, but a couple of plays improves the effect no end.

DAVID BOWIE: Life On Mars? — (RCA Victor 2316). From the Hunky Dory album, and there's not a lot one can say about it. David enters right away, using his wavering-vibrato voice, and with just piano, and then there's a thunder of strings, and he reaches up into the sky, and there's the odd exclamatory phrase which bites through what I think is a slightly over-done arrangement. But Bowie is quite a technician. He's really as much actor as singer, so he moves flexibly from light to shade and back again. Having found that I HAVE said quite a lot about it, one can only commend it — **CHART CERT.**



The Bee Gees: Wouldn't I Be Someone (RSO 2090 III). Straight down to business on this one . . . that is the breathy Bee Gee vocal trademark, and a backing of utmost simplicity. Gradually the lungs expand, string players emerge from behind the pillars and the volume

increases definitely if not exactly defiantly. Meaningful instrumental touch comes then, Robin has a go — it's softly sentimental, vibrato-ish pop. And, for my money, ruddy good — **CHART CERT.**

OCTOPUS: Hey Na Na (Mooncrest). Belgian-formed group who go for a happy sort of basic rock — this one is built round a vocal riff which in the end invades the mind, slightly unbalancing it. Okay sounds.



TREVOR CHANCE: So Close (GL 102). Show-biz moguls are moving heaven and earth to launch this guy as a big new superstar, and let's say right away that the raw-material is promising. He's a swing-type singer, one of those dinner-jacket, easyphrasing guys and the voice is flexible, likeable and forthright. The song actually is a technique-stretcher, not to mention it's commercial appeal. Should make it. Good lad, Trevor — **CHART CHANCE.**

MUNGO JERRY: Alright, Alright, Alright (Dawn DNS 1037). Back to top form, I'd say. Ray Dorset rasps away as happily as ever, tut-tutting, or even toot-tooting early on, and then into one of those good-time infectious chorus songs. It's a brand-new line-up now (Paul Hancock, Bob Baileys and John Cook with Ray) and there's the old-time foot-tapping, finger-snapping, head-lolling approach. Ray really enjoys his work. — **CHART CHANCE.**

BRIAN KEITH: Kids Never Harm Anybody At All (Jam). This bloke can sing the pants off most of his contemporaries, so it's both unjust and unrealistic that he doesn't have hits of his own. This is a schmaltzy song, catchy, but it doesn't really stretch his fine technique.

Reviews by Peter Jones

MALCOLM AND ALWYN: Fool's Wisdom (Pye). Singer-writer team who admit to Dylan-Simon influences, but then who in this folksey field isn't influenced by one or other? Friendly folksey song, but not a hit single. Album upcoming; could be nice.

SLOANE: Josephine (Alaska). Semi-martial beat, then violin, then low-reach vocal scene on a story-line song, a bit short on your actual melody. Beat is okay. But just a so-so single.

MILKWOOD: I'm A Song (Sing Me) (Warner Brothers). I like this one very much. A sensitive but pointed treatment of the Neil Sedaka song, and sort of arrangement that is both simple and complementary. The chorus is really strong.



Simon Turner: The Prettiest Star (UK 44). Is this the one for Simon? He's much-boasted, highly-heralded, and now he sings a David Bowie song, so the odds must be shortening on him hitting the charts. Nice guitar-boosted intro, waltz-tempo, and a light-weight voice which, nevertheless, make a personable point. It's simply, straightforward, direct, and should sell well. Nice use of strings later on — **CHART CHANCE.**

COLOURS: He's In Town (Alaska). High-pitched voices over a gentle semi-reggae sort of beat. It's okay, but a bit airy-fairy now I come to think about it.

GUY ANGIER: Jacaranda Blues (Decca). Dramatic opening, instrumentally, then mixed-voice chorus with perky strings. Lead voice hidden away a bit, and the overall effect is a bit too involved, I'd say, to click.

BETTY JOE: D'Yer Mak'er (Bell). Song written by the gents of Led Zeppelin projected by a wavering, uncertain, lady of indeterminate age. But it has a strange fascination.

WILLIAM MCCAULEY ORCH: Jalna Theme (Capitol). From Canada, the theme from the telly series The Whiteoaks of Jalna — friendly sounds.

TREVOR CHANCE: So Close (GL). Piano-introed swinger of a disc; cabaret-type vocalist moving along, with chorus.

TODAY'S PEOPLE: He (RCA Victor). Mixed-voice group and the arrangement and construction of this one really does have grow-on-me appeal.

THE BUCKTON BOYS: Clunk Click (CBS). Sound-effect piece hammered home by young-sounding voices — all proceeds to the Stoke Mandeville Hospital Caravan Fund.